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**Prose of Otherness in *Tamas***

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**Prose of Otherness in *Tamas***

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**Approval Letter**

This thesis submitted to the Central Department of English Tribhuvan University, by Anju Gautam, entitled “Prose of Otherness in *Tamas*” has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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### **Abstract**

Set in a small-town frontier providence in 1947, just before partition, *Tamsas* tells the story of a sweeper named Nathu who is bribed and deceived by a local Muslim politician to kill a pig, ostensibly for a veterinarian. The following morning the carcass is discovered in the steps of the mosque and the town, already tension-ridden, erupts. Enraged Muslims massacre scores of Hindus and Sikhs, who in return, kill every Muslim they can find. Finally, the area's British administrator calls out the army to prevent further violence. The killings stop but nothing can erase the awful memories from the minds of the survivors, nor will the various communities ever trust one another again.

The events described in *Tamas* are based on true accounts of the riots of 1947 that Sahani was a witness to in Rawalpindi, and this new and sensitive translation by the author himself resurrects chilling memories of the consequences of communalism in which we find Sahani's sorrows associated with Hindus. No doubt, he has given a detailed account of partition violence but he presents Hindus as innocent and Muslims as barbaric. He gives much focus to prove Muslims as criminals and he protects Hindu crimes as self-defending acts. When we reach the depth of this novel we can clearly find out Sahani's sense of separation towards Hindu and Muslim. Being a very skilled and wonderful narrator of partition movement he seems to be taken a neutral position. But ultimately how he favours his belongings is the interesting aspect of this research.

## Contents

	<b>Page No.</b>
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
1. General Introduction	1-12
II. Prose of Otherness in Post Colonial Writings	17-27
Prose of Otherness and Partition Historiography	17
Celebration of Communalism and Nationalism	24
Post-Colonial Culture and Literature	29
III: Prose Of Otherness In <i>Tamas</i> : An Analysis	32-39
Sense of Othering in Sahni's <i>Tamas</i>	36
Sahni's Oral Based Narrative	40
Presentation of Hindus Action as Self Defense	44
IV. Conclusion	50-49
Bibliography	50

## General Introduction

The central concern in the present research is to study the Hindu-Muslim relation and to explore whether a Hindu writer's work depersonalizes the author or not, in another level, my attempt here is to explore prose of otherness in *Tamas*. The chapters, which specifically belong to Bhisham Sahni's imaginary land, are the interesting aspect of this research. In the issue of partition violences many facts based novels are written, and Bhisham Sahni's present novel is the combination of both fact and fiction. The main concern of this work is to see the position of the author where he tries to represent the violence as he becomes prejudiced and shifts the focus especially in the fictional part.

*Tamas* was published in the 1994, the time when the most of the British colonial countries had already achieved political independence and few others were in the process of independence. The acme of world power that Britain practiced until the World War Second was no longer existing; yet the countries under its Empire were not free from the hangover of colonization. Cultural confusion was persisting and people in such countries were bewildered. Cultural identity of the immigrants was rather worse for the different reasons: firstly they were immigrants from their native land to the land of foreigners, where for them not only the geography was new but also the language and culture. They could neither keep their native culture living, nor could they adopt the new one. And, neither could they communicate in their mother tongue, nor did they know the language of the new country. So, they were facing the trauma of hermeneutical gulf and were hanging somewhere in between two the cultures.

The second problem of immigrants that they were facing was-the country where they had immigrated was not an independent land; rather it belonged to the English empire. So, having exposed both in foreign and colonized zone, their identity was

blocked at the two spots. Such cultural confusion and crisis of identity were expressed in the writings of the time since independence was not restricted only to the political freedom, but also to the cultural and economic aspects as well. Elleke Boehmer gives more importance to the cultural aspect in the course of colonization as well as independence. According to him, the restoration of political rights is not enough; rather one should get freedom from the colonization of mind. He says:

Cultural representations were control first to the process of colonizing other lands; and than again to the process of obtaining independence from colonizer. To assume control over the territory or a nation was not nor only to exert political or economic power, it also to have imaginative command. (Colonial and Postcolonial Literature 5)

It becomes clear with Boehmer's view that despite the political freedom, countries under British Empire were not free and they were still under the imaginative command.

*Tamas* also deals about cultural chaos, identity crisis, religious fanaticism and riots in general. The novel has been set in a multicultural location like India, Pakistan and the former colony of British Empire. But the time this novel was written and the time it talks about are different. The novel, written in 1994 and talks of 1947, about the situation of partition violence and pre-history.

The seeds of partition were shown long before independence in the struggle between various fractions of the Indian nationalist movement, and especially of the Indian National Congress, for control of the movement. Muslim felt threatened by Hindu majorities, the Hindus, in their turn felt that the nationalist leaders were coddling the minority Muslims and slighting the majority Hindus.

The All India Muslim League was formed in 1906 by Muslims, who were suspicious for the mainstream, they were secular, but Hindu majority Indian National Congress. A number of different scenarios were proposed at various times. Among the first to make the demand for a separate state was the writer Allama Iqbal, who in presidential address to the 1930 convention of the Muslim League said that he felt a separate nation for Muslim was essential in an otherwise Hindu dominated subcontinent. The Sindh Assembly passed a resolution making it a demand in 1935. Iqbal, Jauhar, and others then worked hard to draft Mohammad Ali Jinnah to lead the movement for this new nation. By 1930, Jinnah had despaired of Indian politics particularly getting mainstream parties such as the congress to be sensitive to minority priorities. He went on to become known as the father of the nation, with Pakistan officially giving him the title *Quaid-e-Azam* or "Great Leader." At the 1940 AIML conference in Lahore, Jinnah made clear his commitment to the separate states, a position from which the League never again wavered:

The Hindus and the Muslims belong to two different religions, philosophies, social customs and literature .... To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such state. (112)

However, Hindu organizations such as the Hindu Mahasabha, thought against the division of the country, were also insisting on the same charm between Hindus and Muslims. In 1937 at the open session of the Hindu Mahasabha held at Ahmedabad, very Savarkar in his presidential address asserted, "India cannot be assumed today to be Unitarian and homogenous nation, but on the contrary there are two nations in the main- the Hindus and the Muslims".



Many of the congress leaders are secularists and resolutely opposed the division of India on the line of religion, the extremely influential Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, popular among the Hindu majority, is both religious and irenic, believing that Hindus and Muslims can and should live in amity. He opposes the partition saying, "My whole sole rebels against the idea that Hinduism and Islam represents two antagonistic cultured and doctrines. To assent to such a doctrine is for me a denial of God" (112).

For years, Gandhi and his adherents to keep Muslims in the congress party (a major exit of many Muslims activists began in the 1930s) in the process enraging both Hindu and Muslim extremists. Gandhi was assassinated soon after partition by Nathuram Godse, who believes that Gandhi is appeasing Muslim at the cost of Hindus Politicians and community leaders on both sides whipped up mutual suspicion and fear, culminating in dreadful events such as the riots during the Muslim league's "Direct Action Day" of August 1946 in Calcutta in which more than 5000 people are killed and many more are injured. As public order broke down across all northern India and Bengal, the pressure increased to seek a political partition of territories as a way to avoid a full-scale civil war.

Right until 1946, the definition of Pakistan as demanded by the league is so flexible that it has been interpreted as a sovereign nation Pakistan, or as a member of a confederated India. A few historians believe that this is Jinnah's doing and that he intended to use Pakistan as a means of-bargaining in order to gain more independence for the Muslim dominated provinces in the west from the Hindu dominated center.

Many other experts believe that Jinnah's real vision is for a Pakistan that extended into Hindu-majority area of India by demanding the inclusion of the East Punjab and West of Bengal, including Assam. All Hindu majority country, Jinnah also fight hard for the annexation of Kashmir, a Muslim majority state with Hindu ruler; and the accession of Hyderabad and Junagadh, Hindu-majority states with

Muslim rulers. Such political devices bring into question Jinnah's Two-Nation Theory by his interest in areas with heavy Hindu populations. The border between India and Pakistan was determined by British Government-commissioned report usually referred to as the Radcliffe Award after the London Lawyer, Sir Cyril Radcliffe, who wrote about it. India was formed out of the majority Hindu regions of the colony and Pakistan from the majority Muslim areas.

Partition changed all that political scenario of that time. Bhisham Sahni had to migrate to the new India from where even Lahore seemed to be a foreign land. The trauma that the forced dislocation left on this budding writer's mind is portrayed with extreme sensitivity and little recrimination in two of his most stirring pieces of fiction: *Amritsar Aa Gaya*—and *Tamas*. *Amritsar Aa Gaya*, is a short story and *Tamas* a full-fledged novel. Both effectively capture human tragedy of a gigantic proportion. *Amritsar* is a brilliant portrayal of how people are totally dehumanized by mass frenzy to the level that they are reduced to a limp helplessness or unreasoning rage. It portrays how, with the crossing of man-made borders, human nature could itself mutate with the victim becoming an aggressor and aggressor a victim. Alongside Sadat Hassan Manto's *Toba Tek Singh*, and *Amritsar* merits a place of honor in the literature of India's troubled partition.

But to know the complete story of partition and its searing impact on human we have to wait for Sahni's celebrated novel *Tamas*. The mere fact that he lives with the story for over a quarter-century and brought it to fruition after much reflection, speaks of the deep emotional investment that Sahni brought to this novel. Recognition and acclaim for a master piece came almost instantly, for some strange, hitherto unfathomed reason the human tragedy of partition had escaped the literature of the Hindi heartland. Unlike their Urdu, Punjabi and Bengali counterparts, writers in Hindi tended to be rather

negligent about the wrenching tragedy of partition. Before *Tamas*, the only honorable exception in Hindi language was Yasrail's "*Jhutha Sach*." A much more realistic and poignant portrayal, *Tamas*, brought Sahni the Sahitya Akademi award for 1975.

In second incarnation of *Tamas* as tele-serial by a noted film director and Cinematographer Govind Nihalani, *Tamas* proved an even more potent force for dispelling the darkness of communal prejudice. Released in the late-1980s the series struck an instant chord in the popular understanding, with the majoritarian communal campaign growing in intensity and public displays of sectarian religiosity gaining a fresh vogue. *Tamas* not only attacked the sectarian version of tragedy of partition, but also forcefully contested the growing communalization of popular common sense, that too in public space.

Elements of the religious right the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), the Bajrang Dal and the Rashtriya Swayamesewak Sangh (RSS) – organized demonstrations, which testified to the efficacy of the message of *Tamas*, perhaps Sahni derived a special satisfaction from the virulence of the campaign against *Tamas*, for despite his gentle public persona, his convictions were rock like in their firmness. It is for precisely the reason that SAHMAT's anti-communal campaign was particularly close to his heart. Lilit Mohan Joshi, in an interview comment upon Sahni as, "Sahni is neither a one-issue personality nor a single theme writer." He belonged to a generation of Hindi writers that was modeled in the struggle against imperialism and continued the fight for a dream of social, political and economic equality in independent India. His abhorrence of communalism derived from an intimate knowledge of how it turns humanity against itself. It is this sensitivity that led him to see haves versus have-nots divide lurking behind the periodic eruptions of communal madness. In one of the episodes in *Tamas*, a rich trader enlists the help for an affluent acutance from the other community to secure

this own personal safety. He then rushes to protect his wealth and asserts from harm, putting in harm's way the innocent life of a co-religionist who happens to be his servant. His acquaintance in turn, after ensuring that those of similar wealth in the other community are out of danger, gives vent to an urge for revenge attacking a totally unsuspecting and innocent servant.

Sahni, is a writer of wide range and variety. His corpus includes five novels apart from *Tamas*. Out of these, *Mayyadas Ki Mandhi*, though deprived to some extent of the critical attention it deserves, could easily be rated among the most significant of modern Hindi novels. His other novels greatly enrich our understanding of the complexities of human nature and relationship. His last novel *Neelu, Nilima, Neelofer*, was published in nine collections and numbering over a hundred, present an even wider range and variety.

Introduced to drama through the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA), Sahni, is a constant presence on stage. He also writes six significant Hindi plays including *Muaavje, Hanoosh* and *Kabira Khada Bazaar*. His stories for children include *Gulel Ka Khel, Balraj My Brother* is an acclaimed biography he wrote in English. He also has translated several authoritative books into Hindi from Russian and other languages. Nirmal Verma, a Jnanpith awarded and a significant writer of Hindi Fiction said, "Even in such a mass of writing, Sahni was continuously growing in a creative sense, without ever repeating himself" (212).

Written in early 1970s, nearly three decades after partition and the attainment of India's Independence from British rule, *Tamas* (Darkness) is the Pinnacle of Bhisman Sahni's literary achievement. In an interview with Lalit Mohan Joshi Sahni, remarks on *Tamas* as, "*Tamas* motivated me most . . . there was an

emotional identification (84). Among his diverse critical responses, Bodh Prakash in his book "Freedom's Cry" comments as:

*Tamas* provides valuable psychological insight for the historian. It reveals not only the complexity of Emotions which lay behind communal violence, but their contradictions. Friendship and hate could co-exist, as could hope and fear. The abnormal circumstance of riots could call forth bestiality or novelist human goodness. (122)

*Tamas* in a true sense is a narrative of riotscape. It sketches a complete anatomy of riots from inception to maturity and also the after-math. Riots are engineered and implemented in urban environment characterized by segregation divides, and isolations—a perfectly fertile ground for reaping the drops of conflicts hatred, mistrusts, etc. There it spreads out in villages.

During partition, urban and-rural areas have different experiment of rioting. *Tamas* is filmed in January-February 1988. The film is widely acclaimed by critics as: "a landmark, a true to life production, and an eye-opening account that helped to understand what had hitherto remained by a large incomprehensible" (104). Another critic Ravikant, responded the text in such a way, "The importance of *Tamas* was also sought to be underlined in its reformatory role in the present. Which in turn of that gruesome past" (163). Sahni, in an interview with Alok Bhalla says, "Part of the novel is autobiographical. But the central of it is not about my experience, it is concerned with more general experiences and it has historical importance" (110).

The writer ably demonstrates hardships faced by minorities in rural parts. How the life is shattered in every possible manner properties is buried burnt and captured. All that is dear to hearts had to be left behind, hard decisions are made without heart's acceptance and in search of safe, refugee people embarked upon a

journey of uncertainties. In their absence free looting, of whatever is earned and saved in the course of several past years labour, is destroyed. There is no trust and hope among each other, Jai Ratan, gives-importance to historical aspects of *Tamas* and comments as, "The horrors of this period are realistically depicted and deplored without lapsing into didacticism" (118).

The novel has also been viewed from the dimension of fact and fiction. Diane Watson finds this novel more fictitious. He comments the novel in its style and says that it's a prosaic one. He studies the characters in the novel and groups them in terms of the class they belong. He analyzes Sahni's use of wholly fictional character and examines their realistic presentation. In Watson's words, "*Tamas*, the most prosaic and best of Sahni's novels and the least fraught, draws more historical facts than any of his previous works. He uses culturally marginalized characters and antagonism among themselves" (712). Some feminist critics have examined the novel from feminist point of view, for them this is a "realistic presentation of women misery and their existential crisis" (688).

Regarding *Tamas* some people have given importance to racial aspects or we can say, Hindu-Muslim gulf. Despite having lived together for centuries, they don't trust each other. It is easy to find out how unsecured they feel in other's presence. "Muslims have intruded into all localities neighbourhoods. This town has developed so haphazardly that Hindus and also Musalmans are informed of every bit of news. After 1926, riots such two-third neighbourhood got formed where in Hindus have built houses, like Naya Muhalla, Rajpura, etc. which are exclusively of Hindus-Sikhs, else in all others Musalmaans are present" (*Tamas*, P. 64). Alok Bhalla, in his (The landscape of memories and writing of *Tamas*) an interview with Sahni views it as, "The essential subtext of almost every narrative instant in *Tamas* is that, prior to

the partition, hardly anyone would have asserted that their identities as Hindu and Muslims had been formed in contempt of each other" (87).

Bhisham Sahni addresses, the brutality of communal hatred through the extended through the Punjab to Delhi, Like Khushwant Singh, Kartar Singh Duggal and Bapsi Sidhwa, he portrays the corrosion of human decency and harmony by fear, hatred and revenge. Jay Ratan has translated many short stories and his widely known novel *Tamas*, he says:

The story's power derives from its simplicity and economy of style.

The mounting tension and uncertainty amongst the individual is deftly handled. The writer resists the temptation to moralize, leaving the reader to draw his/her conclusion from the story. The hateful lust for revenge which struck out blindly and claimed. So many innocent victims in 1947 is both encapsulated and exposed in the novel. (106)

In this way Sahni, and his text have been examined so far. Critiques have included both traditional and modern approaches, the most crucially examined aspects are, the subject matter, racial prejudices, position of character, style and its historical implementation. Being an author of contemporary time and issue, there is no lack of critics to view his works with the contemporary approaches. Post-colonial issues of colonial dominance, partition violence, existential crisis, issue of belonging, resistance, migration, cultural plurality center margin dichotomy are central in both his writings as well as research of his writings.

Though various critics commented about *Tamas* with different perspectives, one way or the other their focus more upon its historical aspects, here my departure from them lies in its exploration of prose of otherness in *Tamas*. This research paper

is tentatively divided into four units. The first unit is the synopsis of the entire research work. It begins with the aim of the present research and continues through the political context of the world at the time of the publication of the novel, the unit further develops with the spatio-temporal- context, the text talks about. The author's position as a postcolonial, literature and peculiarity of his writing and his individual texts. Then comes the point of departure from the previously maintained critics, and finally, the plan for entire research work concludes this unit.

The second unit will present the theoretical framework. For that the ideas of some postcolonial theorists and critics will be used as a tool. Gynendra Pandey, and his concept of prose of otherness will be the major support to prove the title. Further more, I will take support with Saidan orientalism and Eliot's theory of depersonalization, writings of Alok Bhalla, Rahi Masoon Raza Bhairav Prasad Gutpta, Sudhir Chandra Aasish Nandy will be prime source of discussion.

The third unit will be the most-important part of the research in which I will explore the Sahni's sympathy with Hindus and his attempt to prove Muslim as barbaric, violent and not trust worthy. In the course of textual analysis, some lines form text that bear great signification and address the hypothesis will be taken in discussion.

In the concluding chapter whether the hypothesis comes under justification will be the prime question of consideration. It is hoped that this research paper will be a support for the scholars who want to conduct a research in postcolonial literature and upon the issue of partition violence, those people also will be benefited who are interested on Bhisham Sahni and his works.



## II. Prose of Otherness in Post Colonial Writings

### Prose of Otherness and Partition Historiography

One of the most remarkable facts about the history is that it is based upon the power of the ruling class people. Generally, memories are the sources for history writing and those are always affected by parties, pressure, groups, communities and nations.

Those histories written on the issue of partition are also intraped with such pressure even if there are some unbiased and factual writing to prtition. The others are more concerned with glorification of nationhood, self protective, based upon oral narrative, more autobiographical, unjudemental and irrational. Consciously or unconsciously the works written by Hindu writers seem to be biased towards the Muslim writers. Both in a very horoscope manner demonstrate the anatomy of riots. Killings bloodsheds, rapes, violence and terrors are skillfully presented in their writings. They afforded their best to narrate the events by taking a neutral position but they lack the art of depersonalization and nearly produce prose of otherness.

It is said that the historians/writers seeking to represent violence in history face problems of language also. One cannot describe pain and suffering in depth through language and very challenging to be objective and express suffering at the same time. In such circumstances, there raise the question of authenticity of history recorded by the states.

History works to produce the truth (the truth of the violence of 1947) and to deny its force at the same time. If we examine the history of partition, it says and denies its event fullness at the same time, several different techniques are employed for that. One is to declare such violence non-narratable 'the limit case' of history as it has been described in the instanced of the Holocaust. The problem is that of the

peculiar individuation of these uniquely unique events, a leading philosopher has declared. Urvashi Buialla, in his *'partition and memory'* says, "victimization is the other side of history that no cunning of reason can ever justify" (65). And another partition writer Recouer writes, reflecting on the theme of *Tremendous Horrendous* in our experience of the past, "Every other form of individual is the counter part to a work of explanation that connects things together, But horror isolates events by making them incomparably unique and unequally unique" (126).

It is notable that national identity has been one of the observations of French politics and history in these post national times. Braudel was the distinguished historian of France to succumb to the temptation of returning to national history, with the publication of the finest volume of his *Licentiate deal France* in 1986. As a commentator he has noted, "the 1980s saw a huge outpouring of multi-volume collective histories of France, mostly in traditional narrative mode, which would not have looked out of place at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century" (88). In the ambitious project he guided on *Less Likewise de More*, a project self-consciously designed to break down narrative history.

The long enduring colonial continent called Europe and empire without history were led by the world capitalism that is the history of dominant world order within which diverse societies have been compelled to live. Total Asad writes in a review of Eric Welf's *Europe and the People without history*, ". . . there are also histories (some written some yet to be written) of the diverse traditions and particles that once shaped people's lives and that cannot be reduced to ways of generating support to us or of conquering the ruling others" (102). Asad's statement may seem to apply only to the time of past before the advance of capitalism and its attendant political and ideological structure, these other histories, other radiant and practices,

continue to have a signifying life, sometimes robust, sometimes fitful and fugitive even under the sway of capitalism and the new globalization and even in the heart lands of capitalism.

The enduring concern with unity in Indian historiography is easier to comprehend if we see in the context of nationalist histories produced in other countries that gained their independence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The major organizing point in most of these has been precisely the process leading to national independence, which has been marked the end of history. History stops in textbooks of Indian history, as in the case of 1947 after which political science and Economics supervene. Along with this, Indian historians have drawn an important dividing line between the history of nationalism in India leading to independence in 1947, and the history of what is called 'communalism' (internal conflict ansectarian strife) leading to partition. Scholars, under the states of persuasions have written forcefully, and often with considerable sophistication, of the new force and contradictions that came with colonialism, and of the growth of anti-colonial movement, leading to national independence. This is the real history of India, especially the India of late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. By contrast, the history of partition is seen as something as an intrusion a dramatic and as it was for some time represented, ephemeral deviation for the 'natural' movement towards majority, independent rule in a united subcontinent. Whether it is intrusion imposing or whatever, partition still required explanation. To ascribe it simply to the machination of the colonial regime or the fall out to the misdeeds of antisocial elements and self-seeking politician was rhetorically effective, historically unconvincing or at least inadequate. What Indian historians did in addition was to move their case to another, first by drawing the distinction between 'cause' and 'events' and suggesting that the investigation of the former was the primary task of the

historian, and secondly by consigning violence, as historiography has often done to realm outside the domain of history. Historians of partition have departed even from the origins outcomes arrangement that has been the trademark of history writing on many of the majority events of recent centuries.

The violence recognized as such by historians is divorced from the routinized violence that marks the functioning of the modern bureaucratic state and advance of modernity in general as well as the daily lives of marginal groups' untouchable immigrants, women, children, domestic servants and myriad others. Such violence and acts of counter violence it provokes is so 'normal, so 'everyday,' so little threading of secularity and trade that it goes unrecorded by the state and media except occasionally in sensational accounts of 'criminality', deviance' or 'madness' and rarely forms part of historians history.

One of the most remarkable facts about colonialist historical writings of India is that they have so little to do with India. Indian history is effectively assimilated to the history of Great Britain. As James Mill Said about Indian History, "The subject forms an entire and highly interesting portion of British History" (287). Colonial writers mentioned this perspective. India simply happens to be the focus on an event which functions there as a moment of great historical crisis for the British nation the 1857 is about the challenge to the British and their enterprise in the East. It is a history of dangers faced by the handful of British folk in India, the heroism and sufferings of this chosen people- men, women, children, soldiers and civilians, and the lesson to be drawn from their dramatic experience.

In a parallel way, the history of partition in India has been a history of crisis for the Indian nation and the nationalist leadership. This is not a history of lives and experience of the people who lived through that time. Identity crisis or uncertainties

that partition created or reinforced personal pain and suffering of individual losses and heroism (often thought of as being trivial or irrelevant in modern scientific history writing) are quite acceptable in the case of colonialist historiography 1857. As long as these concern the suffering and heroism are of British, they are acceptable again, if we take the twentieth century example, in nationalist accounts of revolutionary terrorists fighting for liberation in India as in Ireland, Spain or the soviet union. The point is that the issue is precisely the question of granted agency, whose history we seek to write and whose pain and suffering therefore matters.

On the question of partition Indian historiography occupies a paradoxical position. On the one hand, partition has dominated the consciousness of writers and professional historians in a remarkable way. The partition of India may indeed be described as the single most important event in the history of the twentieth century. Consequently, historians of communalism or more broadly still of Hindu and Muslim politics in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, have written their respective histories as if they were nothing but the prehistory of partition, to build up to the denouncement of the mid 1940's or what amounts to the same thing, the long struggle to prevent it.

On the other hand, the history of partitions effectively suppresses by the focus on India's freedom struggle the unity of Indian and the many sided struggle to liberate it. The implication indeed is that the nationalist enterprise continues almost unaffected by partition and all that accompanied it. The history of partition (sometimes called the history of communalism) is presented separately, or as best as the subordinate and presently inconsequential motif in the larger drama of India's struggle for independence.

The suppression of the history of partition occurs by another means as well. Historiography, Indian and non Indian, has been loathe to examine the massive

violence that accompanied, partition and the experiences and emotion of the people involved in or affected by it. Indeed, the writing on partition (and more generally, on the last years to the British rule in India) is perhaps the most elitist branch of what has long been an elitist historiography, as Sumit Sarker writes, "Literature exists on the tortuous negotiations between British congress and Muslim league politicians which culminated a freedom which was also a tragic partition" (221). In sharp contrast, he adds there has been little research or writing on the militant mass movements of the period and the political pressure that under which these are constituted.

The historians craft has never been particularly comfortable with such matters; the horror of partition, the anguish and sorrow, pain and brutality of the 'riots' of 1946-7 has been left entirely by creative writers and film makers. Historians' history tends to produce a prose of otherness in its accounts of 'mass' and specially mass sactorial violence. It is not the problem of partition historiography or historical writing on India alone the shared ground between colonialist and anticolonialist.

While historians history must necessarily be concerned with structure and contingency at the same time the historian, need to struggle to recover 'marginal books and memories', forgotten dreams and signs of resistance. If history is to be anything more than a celebratory account of the march of certain victorious concepts and power like science and progress this is task to which for reason touched on above the historiography of partitions is not addressed itself. In July 1947 Patel had written to an anxious Hindu correspondent from west Punjab that while the matter of citizenship was at the moment under the consideration of the Indian constitute assembly, "whatever the definition may be you can rest assured that the Hindus and Sikhs of Pakistan cannot be considered as aliens in India. Like the land and the trees,

rivers and the mountains the "Hindus' were the natural core-the 'us' of the Indian nation." (164)

In other words, the Hindus and Sikhs communities were natural citizen of India. If Hindus and Sikhs were naturally 'ours' and Muslims naturally 'theirs' as in the circumstances of partition. They were commonly declared to be the hostile contents of partition, time has also raised the demand that these natural possession be restored to their natural homes. The poignant history of women caught on the wrong side of the new international border illustrate some often-tragic consequences of the curious clops of religious community into natural nation. According to Gynendra Pandey:

British colonialism in India regularly presented the 'native as a primitive other, and violence- and at others times it exactly opposite, complete passivity- as his history ('her') being subsumed in his), Indian nationalism in its turn represented certain kinds of violence and most kind of mass violence as the work of the 'backward' people who were unfortunately ill educated and insufficiently enlightened. (82)

Historian's history maintained this tradition especially in respect of sectarian or ethnic violence. The researches and experiments done by Western people concluded that the 'cruelties', 'crimes' and 'misereries' of the Hindus and Muslims as opposed to the easy tolerance. The reasonableness and obvious good sense of the west with its heritage of enlightenment and Christianity. In the similar way some European commenter have commented in such way:

. . . violence is a product of the absence of goodness, of the Enlightenment of western education. The Hindus and Muslim are essentially a violent community people who will always be liable to weak out into violence until they are disarmed, that is civilized,

disciplined and made worthy of erring licensed arms chiefly through western education. (277)

Instead of examining the particular case of violence they generalized those crime and cruelties. They go for cause and effect, almost all works written in the background of partition are similar in nature, more reluctant to narrate the destructions and chaos through their own perspectives and by binding themselves into certain community or by creating their own territory. In this sense, a most recognized and sahitya academy winner writer Bhishma Sahni excavated the sides of both Hindus and Muslims but consciously or unconsciously his attempt seems to be an effort to prove Hindus as non-violent and their actions as self-defense. His attempt goes to produce language of abuse and creating a demarcation line between Hindus and Muslims. In *Tamas* many chapters are based upon the real incidents and a few are of writers own imagination. Those chapters from imaginary lands are more prejudiced, instead of focusing on the violence he is more concerned to prove barbarism of Muslims against the civilized Hindus. That's why he escape from a true narrative of riots and his consciousness of communalism or nationalism-produced prose of otherness.

#### Celebration of Communalism and Nationalism

This chapter is concerned with Hindu-Muslim relations, racial conflict and the problem may be illustrated by taking into account two terms, that in the context of Hindu Muslim relationship. Figured as critically in political as well as in the academic discourse, nationalism and communalism, are held to be binary categories. In this categorization, which is a part of a larger normative scheme, nationalism is invested with positive and communalism with negative properties. It is in terms of this normatively charged dyad that various, collectives-religions, regional, ethnic view themselves and others in relation to the national state. These collective perceptual projections are neither homogenous nor fixed. They keep fluctuating contextually.



The division between them and us remains ever fluid. Depending upon the issues on question of nation, different criteria come into operation to determine not only group alignments but also the very definition of a given group, not excluding the group called nation. The very distinction between nationalism and communalism is rendered problematic at the label of political discourse, becoming, in extreme cases, a matter to be arbitrated by trial of strength rather by debate.

Nationalism and communalism are expected to yield an understanding of the social reality despite its fluid complexity. It is assumed that, independent of the free floating senses in which they are used by lay people, these terms possess intrinsic meanings of their own. And it is by virtue of these meanings that they make possible a stable picture of the mobile social reality.

It has not been possible to evolve objectively valid criteria for defining nationalism. Taking into consideration a large inventory of factors, such as language territory, culture, geography and religion, scholars have worked hard to define this dominant principle of political organization in modern times. But the phenomenon has eluded all such attempts, each attempted definition mocked by stark exceptions.

The phenomena are in a vital sense indefinable. As the current principle of political cohesion, it is in constant use either to exercise power or to challenge established power or indeed to capture power. Considering that nationalism as an organizing principle is subject to fusion as well as fission nation states are historically contingent units that can expand or control the apparently decisive proof of the existence of a nation state. Similarly, the absence of a state or even territory cannot be treated as an argument against the existence of given nationalism. In such situation, especially during the early stages of such as confrontation, the very existence of a given nationalism becomes a political issue. It is simultaneously asserted and

dismissed by people depending on how they are situated in or inclined towards this confrontation.

Scholars are not above being so situated or inclined with regard to specific assertion and counter-assertions of nationalist consciousness. But they are also influenced by their academic-ideological understanding of nationalism as an historical force when they study particular manifestations of it in a local setting. Since the interaction of nationalism and communalism, as reflected in the understanding of Hindu-Muslim relations are the specific concern of this chapter. It is but appropriate to recall that, as it has developed over the decades of India, Pakistan and Britain, the historiography of the evolution of nationalism in the Indo-Pakistani, subcontinent shows the multiplicity of its perception by variously situated scholars.

The inference is obvious when they are common to both political and academic discourses, terms cannot quite be distinguished as purely political or heuristic. They are locked in a dialectical relationship.

In the Empirical world of political discourse, it makes sense for different groups representing a variety of interests to valorize nationalism as against communalism, and to treat the two as binary categories. But academic discourse is under obligation to follow suit, granted that as a heuristic device, it might serve some purpose to situate nationalism and communalism in opposition to one another. But it should not be forgotten that they are often complimentary.

Following the communal carnage in Bhagalpur (October 1989) and the catastrophic events symbolized by Ayodhya (in the Ramjanam Bhomi despite), something deeply and inescapably unsettling has happened. In our ways of perceiving that part of history which lies behind the specific form that Hindu-Muslim relations have assumed in Indian society at the present juncture. The memory of 1947 not with

standing the scale of the violence has been taken by surprise. The spread of communal violence in rural and tribal areas, which we had all along supposed were immune to communal brutality and insanity, has forced to ask new questions. This is a situation that arouses not only a moral anger and anguish but also a degree of humility because of the tragic exacerbating of communal/acrimony seems to be beyond our capacity to understand.

The agonies and violence depicted on the novel (written during the phase of partition) differs according to writer's community and nationality. Bhairav Prasad Gupta, a Muslim writer and whose mission was to wipe out communal dissections from India and to create a secular, progressive India presents a Muslim Protagonist and Hindu antagonists in his novel *Satti Maiya Ka Chaura* (1959). A massive volume of 743 pages, this novel traces the history of a village by focusing on the lives of two friends, one of whom Manne (Muslim) protagonist is a students of Urdu literature has been decided to take part in Hindi debate. Marked for his intelligence learning and debating skills, he is equally at home and school in both Urdu and Hindi literature. He is tipped to win the debate. This creates a storm in the college. Teachers of the Urdu and Hindi departments, all Muslim in one case and Hindus in the other have their rivalries centered on the single issue of whether a Muslim student can win a Hindi debate.

Minnie, culturally marginalized character faces difficulties as always considered as other and a rogue by the Hindus. Though the scene suggesting the vagueness as well as the vividness of childhood impressions, the novel points to the socialization of individuals as Muslim or Hindu, even as they became conscious of their identity as Indians. Munni, a Hindu boy who is to become Manne's life long friends is in the process of having a nebulous awareness of the national movement and

the realization of distinction between Muslims and Hindus. In terms of such awareness Javeed Alam said, "Today a Muslim shopkeeper in the Southern Indian state of Kerala easily exclaims, on Learning that his middle class customers from Northern India is also a Muslim, Oh! You should have told me you were one of us" (112).

Rahi Masoom Raza shows more than once in *Adha Gaon*, are not always the result of consciously held ideological and political beliefs. They are so often and so tremendously influenced, rather by the contingencies of our existential predicament. Rahi Masoom Raza excels in portraying the unpredictability, tremendousness, and fluidity of human behavior and action. He has little use for the kind of terms of discourse that as social scientists may be considered by many to be our concern in this work. He is concerned more with the inextricable fusions in real life that motivate human beings individually or in groups. Fusion form which we are aberrant terms of discusses such as nationalism and communalism as if they are easily separable. Thus, describing an attack on the local police station during the Quit India Movement, the attack that bestowed upon Chhikuria's father Sturts, a famous novelist writes:

The crowd contained very few people who knew about the slogan of 'Quit India'. Nor did it consist of people who knew the meaning of freedom. These were people who had to pay one and a half times more than the due land revenue, whose harvests had been seized, who had been forced to contribute to the war fund, who had lost or were about to lose their kith and kin in the war, and from whom the local police station had for generation taken bribes. (RAZA, 1989:170)

Likewise the colonial writers represent Indian and the 'natives' as the primitive other and violent. They everywhere superiorize themselves and inferiorize the other

marginal people. Their perspective towards the riots is also biased; they have not given the account by keeping themselves in the neutral position. In the case of Partition violence, native writers blame the Britishers of not applying their effort to control the violence, whereas those Britishers separate them as instinctually violent.

In such a way, almost every writer takes support of their nation and community therefore they lack factual accounts of riots. One way or the other they became conscious of their culture, religion, community, cast and nation and they favor of their belongings. In such celebration of nationalism and communalism, Hindu Muslim antagonism further increases and their effort to demonstrate the violence remains unfulfilled rather they merely produce the story of agony, which lacks the facts.

#### Post-Colonial Culture and Literature

Culture, being a term that bears very broad meaning, has been differently viewed in different periods by different thinkers. In its early usage, it is used to refer to organic cultivation made in the laboratory and so by extension to human accomplishment. It also used to refer to intellectual and artistic works or practices, which in their very famous meanings define human society as socially constructed rather than natural one. The later usage of the term "culture" is different from its early usage.

Fredric Jameson defines culture as a means of interaction between two groups. This means cultural identity of a group comes from its interaction with another group. He writes, "No group has culture; all by itself culture is the nimbus perceived by one group when it comes into the contact with and observes another one [ . . . ] then a culture is the objectification of everything alien and strange about contact group" (on culture, 271).

While defining culture Edwards Said highlights it as "the source of identity". He agrees with Mathew Arnold's view on culture as a means to differentiate "Us" from "Them". Said further utilizes us them dichotomy and says it is the western invention "for" dominating and reconstructing authority over the orient" (3)

Raymond William's definition of culture as a whole way of life of a social group or society" If we generalized the meaning of culture based on the aforementioned scholar's view, we get one thing in common that is, culture is understood as a shaping force of identity. In the post-colonial world, the questions of identify and belongingness is always under crisis.

Identity in relation to culture is not limited only to one's social exposition rather it is associated to one's history and origin. This can be justified from Stuart Hall's words from *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*.

Cultural identifies are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made, within the discourses of history and culture. Not an essence but a positioning. Hence, there is always a politics of identify, a politics of positing which has not absolute guarantee in an unproblematic, transcendental law of origin.

(49)

When Hall says, a politics of identity, a politics of position, it refers to colonial and post-colonial western tendency to inferior the non west.

To say one's identity is in crisis actually hints to a cultural crisis. One of the most powerful factors that have caused identity crisis is globalization. The globalization, in its long run, has caused the interfusing of identifies, which can be termed as the hybridity of cultural identities. Hybrid identifies are the outcomes of the mixing, fusion and creolization, following the mixing and movements of cultures. The

reference of hybridity in post-colonial theory and studies goes to race and ethnicity. This term is used to describe the newly composed, mixed or contradictory identities resulting from immigration, exile and migration.

"Cultural studies" as a genre can be traced back to the British cultural movement of 1960. Cultural study of the time studied the nature of mass culture and the workings of cultural studies. Raymond Williams' definition of culture as "a whole way of life" replaced the structuralized interpretation of culture. Being is separable with identity, culture has contributed a lot in the scope of post-colonial studies.

When Britain and other colonizers had been practicing the pinnacle of power, discourses produced that time had been the effective support for the European empire to dominate the native lands. Although colonization is supposed to be political phenomena; its effect in culture can not be ignored. Cultural misrepresentation is the great challenge that the natives are facing in the colonial era. Ellek Boehmer in the book, colonial and post colonial literature observes these phenomena "cultural representations were the central first to the process of obtaining independence from colonizers" (230). With Boehmer's view, it becomes clear that, in the process of both colonization and de-colonization, culture is the equally important aspect.

While analyzing about the post-colonial literature we find that the narrator gives much space to narrate the stories of hardships, struggle agonies, hopes, frustration and existential crisis in general. They celebrate the pain and pleasure of the margin and enable them to bask the daylight of history. They idealize the socio-cultural taboos to shatter the difference of good and bad since such dichotomies for them are not other than socio-cultural construction. In the quest of raising the marginal issues they forget their positional identity and produce the works which favour their belongings.

### III: Prose Of Otherness In Tamas: An Analysis

The aforementioned theoretical modality provides insight to find out writers' perspective towards the Muslim people. Bhishma Sahni has tried his best to narrate the events by keeping himself in a vantage point and through his neutral eyes. He was also an eyewitness in riots of 1947 and the previous wars regarding the issue of partition. The present novel *Tamas* is based more upon the facts and some chapters are from writer's own imagination. Being such a world famous and matured writer Sahni does not avoid his personality in this novel. Consciously or unconsciously, he afforded more to prove his race (Hindu) superior and innocent and those Muslims are barbaric and are responsible for all killings and bloodsheds. The actions of Hindus are just a defending act; Hindus are obliged to attack them to save their property and their life. In the very beginning of the novel, Sahni presents a Hindu, (Nathu Chamar) as an innocent who was mistreated by Muslim (Matrad Ali) he has to kill the pig under the obligation of Muslim otherwise his life would be in danger, who (Nathu Ram) does what is to save him, even he take money without his interest. He is totally unknown about the consequence where they will take the carcasses of that pig and what will happen in the city. But those Muslims are consciously making the plans or conspiracy to trap the Hindus. When they find the dead body of a pig in the mosque, they blame the Hindus and call for wars and destructions:

Mistrust got deeper and hearing gossips like . . . whatever has been found in front of mosque, there is a great mischief of Hindus behind that' and ' Pir Sahib does not touch kefirs, and he hates Kefirs, Earlier every one could go to Pir Sahib who love all of them but now he does not touch Kafirs. If some Kafir visited him for treatment he used to . . . but now he does not allow any Kafir to come nearby. (Tamas, 107)



Such talks at common places definitely deteriorate social relations and harmony, particularly when the environment is communally charged.

Sahni presents the Hindus as an innocent people and they are in favour of controlling communal break down. But in the whole novel we cannot find their single effort to solve the problem, rather they unite the community and prepared themselves for defense. In most of the cases even they attack at first, but those attacks never bring in discussion by the writer. His presentation of Hindus as prayer of peace, despite their activities of cruelties confirms him as a writer of biased attitude and vision.

Here the researcher feel authentic to bring in discussion some of the character portrayed by the author.

From the very beginning of the novel Sahni takes Hindu's side and makes responsible those Muslims for all forthcoming consequences:

Nathu Chamar, is obliged to obey the people on power, by nature he is an innocent and poor, so he is always under the domination of rich. After killing the pig he goes through guilt, anger and frustration to get mental peace. "What a nasty trap I am caught in," moaned Nathu as he come and stand by the Eric Wlalof the courtyard" (8).

Poor Nathu doesnot know what he has done by killing that pig. After forcefully accepting Murad Alis offer to do so, a great misfortune comes in his life. He is really unknown about the purpose of the task he accepts and later on accomplished. Sorrows reflects upon his face and he is not able to share the fact that he kills the pig and that has done without knowing the reality of the horrible disaster. He becomes the victim of conspiracy of Muslims. Later on when he know town and cities burning because of the carcasses find in the mosque. Nathu realises his guilt and breaks out emotionally, "I kill that pig, " (150). And, confessed: even then could not

feel free. That dead body of pig thrown on the Mosque brings disaster in the town, Muslims blame Hindus for that mischief but on reality it was done by muslim themselves, they are the doer and revenger both. Riots began with torching the grain market. Urban landscape gets gradually convert into riots cape, dominating personal and public spaces, and in that riots poor innocent Nathu Ram is killed by barbaric Muslims.

In another episode, Sahni portrays Hindu and Sikh couple in a very miserable condition. Harman Singh and Banto are earning their lives by running a teashop in the village. They are the inhabitants of that village years and years ago, but in the time of communal break down they are obliged to leave their home, shop and their property. Muslims looted their shop, fired the house and those old couple are forced to leave the village to save their lives, they go through various mental and physical operations. They are not safe even by neighbour and friends. Despite living together for centuries they do not trust each other. Longing by the desire to live they leaves the village at night. When they reach in house almost in the half dead situation, they get pity but do not get love, trust and security. Being a well recognized person, Muslim women provide them permission for one night stay, but unfortunately her husband and son mistreat them. Ultimately, they leave their house in the dark mid night and towards uncertain future.

In such a way, in this episode also Sahni, presents the Muslim as terrorist, untrustworthy, violent and ignorant. Instead of Hindu couple, he can have presented Muslim couple in the same miserable condition, but in almost every chapter he presents Hindus as victim, he is biased towards Muslim. Somehow or the other, he seems to have been trying to hide Hindus cruelties and to excavate Muslims faults:

. . . Ramzan shouted and putting out his hand caught hold of Harnam Singh by the throat. The collar button on Harnam Singh's shirt broke and fell down on the floor, and the turban on his head became loose,. With the swiftness, with which he had caught hold of Harnam Singh's neck, his finger left reddish marks on Harnam Singh's neck. Twice Ramzan raised his pickaxe to strike. (268)

In the same manner Sahni has presented Iqbal Singh as a scapegoat of Muslims. While Ramzan and his fellow freebooters are returning from their exploits in Dhok Elahi Bakash and Muradpur, they suddenly noticed a young Sikh, at some distance running for his life. Ramzan shouted 'Ya Ali' (48) and all fellows ran after him. Innocent Sardar (Iqbal Singh) tried his best to hide him but all in vain those wilds hurled stone to him, on the cave, when he loses all his tolerance he comes out and surrendered. They torture him physically and rape him mentally. Finally, they forced him to convert into Muslim by teasing and beating, they make him to recite "Kalma" and gave his hair and bared a Muslim cut. The more he gets suppressed from their mistreatment the more they get excited and they played with him emotions. These lines expose Muslims barbarity to that poor Hindu unfortunate fellow:

All of them ran in that direction. Stones began to be hurled into two or three caves simultaneously. In the caves stone hit the Sardar on his right knee but he did not cry out; and crouched close to the wall of the cave . A volley of stones followed this. Some stones hit the wall of the cave while others hit his knees or shoulders or force led. The Sardar was in the great pain but suppressed all his wonds. (71)

Such horror some events are presented in almost every chapter and Muslims are made responsible for every disaster. Hindu people like Nathu Chamar, Jasbir

Kaur, Sikhs couple, Ranvir all are victims and their activities are presented just as self-defending act. In such way, those characters who belong to Sahni's community are treated as poor innocent enraged with fate, tortured by communal fany and victimized by barbarism. In almost every chapter, he has sympathized with his belongings and efforts his best to dig out the sin of others. Those events in which Sahni himself was an eyewitness and those which are based on oral narrative, all were guided by the demarcation line of communalism. In an Interview, Bhisham Sahni had said about the cause of partition as: ". . . I suspected that the Muslims felt that India was predominately Hindu country and that their future lay in having separate nation of their own. . . political antagonistic process starts, people do begin to define themselves differently" (102). In this way we found that there lies an implied meaning in his expressions, as the root cause of partition and that massive violence are Muslims.

#### Sense of Othering in Sahni's *Tamas*

*Tamas* proved an even more potent force for dispelling the darkness of communal prejudice. Released in the late – 1980s the series struck an instant chord in the popular understanding, with the majoritarian communal campaign growing in intensity and public displays of sectarian religiosity gaining a fresh vague. *Tamas* not only attacks the sectarian version of tragedy of partition, but also forcefully contests the growing communalism of popular common sense, that too in public space. Sahni is a writer of wide range and variety. He belongs to a generation of Hindi writers that is molded in the struggle against imperialism and continued the fight for a dream of social, political and economic equality in independent India. His hatred of communalism is derived form an intimate knowledge of how in turns humanity against itself. It is this sensitivity that led him to see haves versus have-nots divided

lurking behind the periodic eruptions of communal madness. In one of the episode in *Tamas*, a rich trader enlists the help of an affluent acquaintance from the other community to secure his own personal safety. He then rushes to protect his wealth and assets from harm putting in harm's way the innocent life of a co-religionist, who happens to be his servant. His acquaintance in turn, after ensuring that those of similar wealth in other community are out of danger, gives vent to an urge for revenge, attacking a totally unsuspecting and innocent servant.

In the novel Harnam Singh has become an emblem of uncomprehending sorrow and his suffering is a representative example of everyone who survived those genocidal times. After he reaches the refugee camp, he talks obsessively about all that he had lost and pleads inconsolably for help. In the film, however, he acquires a tragic dignity and becomes a Gandhian figure who can set aside his own sorrow in order to help someone in greater need of solace. Instead of being a bewildered old man, whom one pities, because he has no hope of a life of meaning and purpose, he decides to adopt Nathu's pregnant wife as his daughter. He neither inquires into her past nor does he worry about the fact that she is the wife of a Hindu and Chamar. The novel is bleak, and promises neither forgiveness nor redemption. The film however, ends with Harnam Singh's instinctive resistance to barbarism. His decision to make Nathu's wife as a part of his family is not a fine gesture of "in gathering" and "community-making", but is also contrary to the politics of separate identities and hysterical assertion of religious difference, which led to the partition of 1947 and which still threaten the peace of community. In an interview with Bhisham Sahni, Alok Bhalla said about him that, "when Sahni played the role of Harnam Singh in the film, he felt such deep empathy for him that he forgot the pathos with which the character is depicted in the novel. He added that the moral fortitude of Harnam Singh in the film

was perhaps a result of his own increasing confidence in the ability of the country's composite ethos to withstand new separatist threats and at the same time, to reach out to its neighbours in order to establish a new lease of peace in the region" (86).

When Harnam Sing and his wife knock on Rajo's door seeking refugee and mercy, she doesn't forget that she is a Muslim, but finds herself in difficulty, whether to allow them to enter in the house or not? Confronted with human plea she understands that, whatever her religious faith, her affective being which has been formed within a multi-religious society can retain its integrity only if she fulfills her responsibility towards the old couple, no matter who they are and what their religious faith.

After some hesitation, she decisively says: 'Na Jao ji, ruk jao, sankal chada do . . . . Ghar aaye ko nikaala dun? Allah ke daragah mein Sabhi ka jana hai (Do not go, stay back. Lock the door . . . you knocked at my door with some hope in your heart . . . How can I throw you out of my house? We'll all have to stand before 'Allah's dargah someday . . . (87)

Rajo, the Muslim women, filled with love and sense of humanity, give space to those Hindu couple in such a time of riots but there is the sense of identity and communal bondage in her unconscious or conscious label of mind therefore she ask for gun with Harnam Singh guided by mistrust. Hindu and Muslim, however have affirmed that their finite human lives, their social fates, are entangled with each other but their religious selves are always separate from each other. They also make neighbours, make friendships, they form the same language, they speak together within the same living but the deep rooted sense for a majority of the Hindus and for Muslim cause the terrifying result of partition.

In one of the scene of *Tamas*, a young Hindu boy, kills an old perfume seller, excited by fantasies of Hindu glory and masculine pride. One day when every one are at home because of riots, Inder notice the scent-seller passing through a deserted street. Determined to prove his courage to his companions he kills such an old and innocent person. They know each other, in the time of murder they recognize each other, the old man would have made no sense that even if the time is communally charged and his walking with a Hindu boy. Together they reaffirm kinship, ultimately Inder, prove his separate and egotistical identity in that situation of communal breakdown:

He was so terribly frightened that he could hardly shout. He was dying, not so much from the wound inflicted on him, as from sheer fright, he still couldn't believe that an innocent-looking boy could have attacked him. The load on his back and shoulders became unbearable, and it was under its weight then he fell face downward and whispered 'O, I have been killed !'. (203)

Similarly, in the opening chapter Nathu, intuitively knows that he has done wrong by allowing himself, up to of great and lust to became the cause of the defilement of a mosque. He doesn't regard the communal madness that follows the sidentity but sees it as a sign of the ruin of his ethical self. He openly accepts: "Maine papa kiya hai – I have sinned" (8). Sahni, here idealizes Nathu Chamar and make responsible to Murad Ali (a mulism) under whose pressure Nathu have sinned. Sahni's profound sympathy, pity and emotion purify the Hindu's crime and draw a hasty conclusion that because of poverty he have been used: 'what a nasty trap I am caught in' (8).

Sahni has presented another striking example of separation in *Tamas*.

Sahnawaz, very social man saves Raghunath and family in the time of riots, he never

makes sense that he being a Muslim serving his Hindu friends but he kills that poor man Milkhi and proves his barbarism, he is an example of the fact that instinct and nature is very consistent. No matter, however people hide themselves within the cover of civilization, it exposes when the crisis occur. In an interview with Alok Bhalla, Sahni said:

I didn't try to analyze the cause of the partition in *Tmaas*. I was only interested in describing the incidents I had seen and heard about. I was also trying to record what people thought and felt at that time. If you, however, want to know my own opinion about what happened and why, I still may not be able to tell you. All I can say is that as a humanist and a writer, I cherish certain values and modes of behaviour. I deplore the killings that took place. It was shameful that a large population should have indulged in so much violence. (114)

The above lines spoken for the interview with Allok Bhalla, prove that Sahni wants to be a neutral narrator of the partition movement of 1957, of courses he has done his best to narrate the events by standing upon the vantage point, despite having being used all his efforts he can't depersonalize himself in his Novel *Tamas*. Somehow or the other, it seems that he exercise his intelligence, to prove Muslim as barbaric and Hindus as innocent and their cruelties, murder, rape, looting whatever is compulsion or we can say self protecting act.

#### Sahni's Oral Based Narrative

In nearly all the recollection quoted in this chapter, everyone who is part of the narrators community appears in the position of a victim. In the reflections of the Sikhs of Gharuan, attacks are almost always represented as 'defence' or, when the respondents are being more forthright, as counter-attack's. This is the only kind of



story that is ever recounted, or that every tale of remembered violence is equally coy about acknowledging a part in aggressive actions.

Clearly there are numerous examples of the gleeful reporting of violence in the contemporary records and in survivor's accounts. Witness Khosla's General finding in his 1949 survey of partition violence, "There are many who boast that the total number of Muslims killed (in East Punjab) was more than the number of Hindus and Sikhs who perished in west Punjab . . . , he wrote, (38). or Ram Chandra Thapar's pride in the good work of the Hindus in the 'Calcutta Killings' of August 1946: 'Calcutta has taught (the Muslims) a lesson which they will remember long. Their loss in lives amounted to about 7000 against about 1000 Hindus. They did play havoc on the first two days but on the third and fourth the Hindus, seeing that the police and military were not coming to help, retaliated and relentlessly' (39) or Dehalvi's report of the crowds at Lahore station, waiting to settle scores in the presence of refugee special going the other way and paying back the killers on the other side – with interest.' (40).

Not surprisingly, one also finds recollections that openly celebrates the narrator's own part in the aggressive actions of the time. The account of a captain in the army of the erstwhile Alwar state, recorded by Shail Mayaram in 1993, provides an excellent illustration. The captain speaks of his army's 'operations' against the local Muslims in 1947, and it is worthwhile quoting him at some length:

I was the ADC to HH Tej Singh (the regular of Alwar) . . . I had been decided to clear the state of Muslims, the orders came from Sardar Patel. He spoke to HH on the hot line. The killings of Hindus at Noakhali and Punjab had to be avenged. All the Mes from Ferozpur Jhirka down were to be cleared and sent to Pakistan, their lands taken over, because the refugee from Pakistan were coming in . They told us

all sorts of stories of what they have been done to them. We did whatever was happening their, like parading women naked on the streets in Jtijara and Naugaonawn after their families had been killed [ . . . ] . (40)

Captain narrates such a horror some tale of killing with pride. The same types of violence done by Muslim are consider as murder where as crimes done by Hindus are rewarded as national pride. In Tijara, after a battle that lasted eighteen hours against a force he describes as consisting of 10,000 Meo Muslims, the captain and his troops managed to take the down. 'We killed every man, all of them.' And again, speaking of other sites where the Meos were reported to have gathered in large numbers.

One may gather similar stories of aggressive assertion of 'us' against 'them' even in Gharuan and other village and communities where there a general proposition of 'peacefulness' and 'harmony' within the locality is the stuff of so much nationalist history, and especially with the glory popular 'histories' produced by militant right wing states and movements. The note of defensiveness that is so often present in them still calls for explanation. The survivors stories recounted above frequently become statement, not only of pride in how successfully the actions were carried out but also of the necessity of this obliteration and eviction: It was war, wasn't it? They were doing the same thing to our people on that side, "who began it all? Indeed, the idea of revenge has a great deal to do with the on going cycle of violence in 1947 and the years before and after". (48)

No doubt, the greater or lesser 'defensiveness' of different recollections stems in apart form the divergent circumstances of different field interview. This includes the question of the degree of trust established between interviewer and interviewee, and the particular physical and social setting of an interview. It depends to an extent

on the personal circumstances and careers of the respondents; their military or personal training, the extent of their involvement in 'public' deplete, or of their non-involvement. It has to do with political context:

the time and place in which accounts are collected; the extent of political militancy at the time, among specific groups and classes, in specific regions; the readiness, consequent on the time of the above, to propound radical. Solutions, or on the contrast, the disillusionment that sometimes creeps in which goals that once seemed laudable fail to produce the benefits they were meant to produce. (37)

However, there seems to be another factors at work. What are perhaps being relived in tales of violence constructed in a frankly assertive way are the actual or anticipated disappearances of particular senses of community and the emergence of others. Frequently, one sees, 'our people' and 'theirs' being red scribed different senses of 'us' and 'them' in contention, new nations of community struggling to be born— in the course of the very same narrative. Particular understandings of the local community come at a particular historical conjuncture to have much reduced value. This may be seen as much in Rahi Mason Raza's *Divided Village* called Gangauli, as in the Mewat, Punjab or Alwar of 1947. In Raza's telling phrase "for some time now, in Gangauli, the number of the people of Gangauli has been declining, and the number of Sunnis, Shais and Hindus have been increasing". (42) At the time of general elections in undivided India in 1945-6, according to one intelligence report, "Punjabis ceased to be Punjabis and became Muslim, Hindus and Sikhs." (43) or as intizar Hussain has it in his 'uncohtten epic", this was time when even Zamindars stopped being Zamindars and 'started being Hindus and Muslims'. (44)

However, the 'reinvention' in community is not always easily accomplished, for history and everyday social life-have an uncanny knack of messing thing up. Even in the Alwar region, from where the captain's bombastic account comes, other Hindus inhabitants who took apart in the looting and killing of 1947 often denies what has happened in their villages. The Gharuan case that I have discussed in detail above is another example of this kind of simultaneous loyalty to what we would see as two different 'communities'. So is the case with Dehlavi's Delhi account, "Nothing happened in our community." It was outsiders', Criminals politicians, 'mad men' the dominated and the temporarily crazed who were irresponsible for the 'storm' (48).

In this way, Hindus create the tale of their own victory and so is the case with Muslim. Same hyperbolic and self-defending narrations that we could read easily, written on the issue of partition violence. They aims to strike on riots but dangles more upon self-glorification even such a renounced writer, as Bishma Sahni cannot be an exception. Because his writings are mostly based upon oral narratives and in such narratives whether it is a looser or winner party, everyone attempts to make a tale of their own favor, same case we can found in *Tamas* also. Hindus sing the song of their own victory and Muslims also do the same. Though, in many cases of partition Sahni is an eyewitness but he seems to be more liberal towards Hindus.

#### Presentation of Hindus Action as Self Defense

*Tamas* is the novel in which we can find the thematic organization rather than the structural coherence. The whole novel is divided into many chapters and each chapter presents the scene of criticality of social and communal harmony. After the partition of India and Pakistan, how people feel unsafe from each another's community, how they broke the unity of universal brotherhood and organize the new community according to the religion they belong and the geography, they are related

with is very artistically presented in the novel. Sahni has given a very lively account in every fragment but in each episode he seems to spend his intelligent to prove Hindus action as self-defense.

Through the sixth chapter, Sahni gives the philosophy of Hinduism and it seems as if he has tried his best to prove Hindus as peace lover, "Serve Bhavanbte Sukhina. . . (May every living being in the world be happy and live a contented life) . . . (71) The Vanaprsthis are organized a meeting to discuss on the issues of riots, in the beginning of their discussion they recited the mantra or pray for universal peace:

The invocation filled the hall with an atmosphere of serenity. It secured as though this prayer for peace expressed seasonality was reaching out to every home. It filled very heart with deep satisfaction. After the chanting of humans, a prayer seeking the well being of very living being was sung. The vanaprasthi kept the rhythms by softly clapping his hands. "Grant mercy O Lord, to everyone grant every living creature your blessing [. . .]". (70)

At the beginning and ending of their meeting they pray for universal peace and departed. Here the writer gives much emphasis upon and he forgets how they are involved in criminal activities under the shade of worships and sprays. Even he Idealizes them as the prayer of peace and inferiorize the Muslims as, "Much blighted to this land have been by the sins of the Muslims, even the Divide has refused us this grace, and the earth its beauty." (73)

In nearly all the recollections quoted in the novel, everyone who is the part of Sahni's community appears in the position of a victim. Every attack are almost always represented as 'defence' or when the respondents are being more fortnight, as 'counter-attacks.'

Our primary concern is self-defence and safety. Everything must be done to ensure this. Every householder must immediately store in his house, a canister of linseed oil and a bag of coke and charcoal. Boiling oil can be poured over the enemy from the roof top, red-hot coals can be flung [. . .]. (74)

In the beginning, the writer has presented the Hindus as very innocent, they even never think about war mentally and physically, rather they spend their time for intellectual exercise and peace making. In the time when the riots are almost about to break, vanprasthis have not given any information for preparation to their people and they are more concerned to control it, rather than to challenge it. Where as those Muslims are fully prepared and even they have started to divide Muhallas and attack anti parties, "This is the biggest shortcoming of Hindu character. We think of digging a well only when we are thirsty. The situation is fast deteriorating; the Muslims have already stocked weapons in the Jama Masjid, whereas we are thinking now of buying lathis" (75).

On the one hand, Sahni presents Hindu as an innocent, having being not able to think about war and never prepared for it. On the other hand he idealizes their attitude for revenge as self-defense, he rarely counts those property destroyed by Hindus and looted by them but in almost every narratives he has given an account of those things which are destroyed by Muslims.

At the beginning of the novel when Nathu Chamar kills a pig, Sahni, sympathizes with him and blamed (Muslims) Murad Ali for obliging him to kill the pig, though Nathu had taken a certain amount of money for that but Sahni relates it with Nathu's poverty and naturalize the action. It is true that Nathu was unknown about the upcoming results of killing the pig but he is also morally responsible for the

destruction, which had gone on the issue of throwing the pig in Jame Masjid. By taking that incident riots spread all over the town and the city. Sahni charged all those Chaos and loss as the mischief of Muslim as if Hindus were meditating by sitting in the jungle when the town was burning. No matter, whatever disastrous action have been taken by Hindus, Sahni idealizes all of them as counter attack. "The mischief is spreading, fast. I have heard that a cow too has been slaughtered and it's Limbs thrown outside the dhramshala of Mai Satto. I don't know if it is true, but it is strongly rumored. Streams of blood shall flow if a cow has been slaughtered" (77).

At the end of the novel Ranvir, an innocent Hindu boy turned into a dangerous killer he has murdered a shopkeeper without any serious issue, old man's fault is just that he doesn't obey Ranvir's order at once. The narrator simplifies the action just as the result of Ranvir's quick treatment and even he tried to hide that happening by exposing other Muslim's cruelties. In the same way, another Hindu boy, Inder, attacks upon an old Pedlar (Scent seller) who is earning his bread by selling things in a bag, old man was well recognized person of Inder, when he (Pedlar) saw Inder walking on the lane, he even addresses the boy very lovingly talk about his business and his earning. In the time of communal breakdown, Pedlar trust upon the boy but that conspirator goes on following and at last when he gets the situation, he strikes upon that old, innocent Muslim and makes him a scapegoat just to prove his bravery and to take revenge. Such types of cruelties and killings are narrated by Sahni with biased perspective, in many chapters Hindus are presented with respect and Muslims are given various derogatory terms. While narrating those incidents where he himself was an eye witness are also not free from the communal superiority and class-consciousness. There are so many cases of rape, murder looting and bloodsheds done by Hindus but these all are taken as a compulsion or self-protection. "Why are you

trying to teach us? Why don't you go and teach the 'Muslims? Have the Sikhs till now, killed anyone? Looted anyone's house with their free will? And here is the fellow teaching' us what we should do". (240)

No matter, however blunder mistake has been made by the Hindus in the period of communal riots, there is no any self-effacement in the whole novel rather Sahni has sufficiently exercised his craftsmanship to naturalize action as Ranvir's, Inder's and so many others those who belongs to the writers.

Through the novel, we can clearly understand the writer's attitude towards Muslims. His hatred and mistrust towards them is vomited through his character Ranvir. The Mleccha would appear before Ranvir's eyes again and again. In his neighborhood also, Cobbler who sat by the roadside was a Mleccha, the Tanga driver was Mleccha, Haid his class met with whom he used to play in his childhood was Mleccha and even a fakir who came to beg far also was Mleccha. Ranvir, was irritated by those people surrounded him and he vomited his hatred towards them in such a way:

Mleccha are unclean people, they don't bath, don't even wash their hands after toilet, eat from one another's plate, they have no regular hour of going to toilet, so, the Meleccha came and stood right in front of the yogi and started hard at him. His bominable shadow had hardly fallen on the yogi of Hamalaya, when the yogi opened his eyes. The next moment, a ray of light shot out of the yogi's eyes, and the Mleccha was reduced to a heap of ashes. (82)

Though Sahni has never mentioned his hatred to Muslim openly in the text, we can understand his dissatisfaction with them. To some extent he is similar with Ranvir in the sense that his childhood also went in between the mass of unwanted people whom neither he can accept nor can he reject them openly. In an interview with Lalit Mohan



Joshi, Bhisham Sahni recollects about his childhood memories. " . . . my father was an Arya Samaji. Very active, very staunch. We had Muslim friends, but they never came to our house" (92).

In this writings including *Tamas*, he recollects his childhood memories of partition days. Through which we can make assurance that Sahni have been brought up in the environment where Hindu-Muslim boundary was strong. There is a deep-rooted sense of separation among them in terms of religion, caste and class; therefore his conscious practice of being an independent writer misleads him as a prejudiced narrator of partition movement of 1997.

#### IV. Conclusion

The novel *Tamas* narrates the forgotten stories of those who are killed in riots, contributes a lot the pride of their nation and particularly the immigrants and marginalized individuals. Presenting the central character beyond the mainstream political, economical and social scenario, the novelist confirms his affinity to the people under privilege. Pain of leaving their village, the problem and confusion of being exposed in the land and culture of the 'others' that the characters faced in the first-hand experience of the author himself. Although it is obvious that there is no character in the novel that could be the representative of author, one cannot reject the positional identity of the author with the most of the character. What Sahni does in the novel is that he makes the characters aware of their own story and of nation. Such awareness of the characters is the awareness of the author himself. While writing the history of the forgotten of the so called "history", he gives much space to narrate the stories of their hardships, struggle agonies, hopes, frustration and so on. He celebrates the pain and pleasure of the margins and enables them to bark the daylights of history. He idealizes the socio-cultural taboos to shatter the difference of good and bad, since such dichotomies for him are not other than socio-cultural constructions.

*Tamas* portrays three patterns of life the Europeans rhythm of urban hustle – bustle, and private domains where physical relations are prominent. To narrate the demands of life and worries, Lisa, the deputy-commissioner's wife and her various problems are the medium. How different it was for a handful Europeans, particularly women to even pass time and to get away from the routine of monotony and boredom beer and wine are sought. Interaction among them reflects highly bureaucratic hierarchic internal divides not allowing free exchange. Quite naturally, personal isolation is intensified instead broken down even during socialization.

Rhythm of urban life is painted through the hustle-bustle of a bazaar the market place, the activities of congress, and the playing children. The narrative of bazaar activities ably demonstrates community wise business specialization in which the contributions are from every community. Meaning thereby that it is very difficult, if not impossible to deny the communal cohesiveness at least from the economic functional perspective. It is very clear that congress by that time was highly fragmented from within and several mutual breaking were deep rooted. Similarly, the party had lost its credentials particularly among Muslims' majority to which it was a Hindu party. Hence, it could not gain mass support and relevance of its programmes seems doubtful.

Another considerable space is devoted to Natthu's personal life, the physical communication between him and his wife. After having done the job of pig killing, he felt the need of warmth of female body, thinking sometimes of his own wife and sometimes to go to visit some whore. Finally, he come to his wife and tries to get relief in her company. He tries to make love but he can not.

Life is not the same after the era of darkness of riots. Villages become half villages and naturally a new socio-cultural organization of life took over the previous ones. People refugee on their own land and desperate to go home. Homes are looted by the evils of the society like Ramzan or Shahnawaz. They are over anxious to the extent of madness to know the whereabouts of family members separated in the process. The novel attempts a detailed and graphic account of the lives of ordinary people in the countryside around the period that witnessed the division of India and its aftermath. Though, a scene suggesting the vagueness as well as the vividness of experience of violence, the novel points to the socialization of individuals as Muslim or Hindu, even as they become conscious of their identity as Indians. The identical

awareness as Hindu and Muslim have created communal disharmony in the society. In true sense, Sahni's present novel is a narrative of riot scope. It sketches a complete anatomy of riots, from inception to maturity and also its aftermath. Riots are engineered and implemented in urban environments characterized by degradation, divides and isolation-a perfectly fertile ground of reaping the drops of conflicts, hatred, mistrust etc. Thereafter it spreads out in space and also time engulfing villages. During partition, urban and rural areas have different experience of riots.

Sahni ably demonstrates hardship faced by minorities in rural parts. How the life is shattered in every possible manner. Properties are buried and burnt and captured, refuge people embarked upon a journey of uncertainties. Places of worships are used as 'warship'. The acquaintances suddenly turn to unknown village were burnt down and forced conversions become fun plays. Let us consider the example of Iqubal Singh who is humiliated worse than an animal despite the fact that he agreed to conversion.

Presenting the fragment of history of the character, he abandons the use of liner time as the basis for the sequencing the events to move away from the governing conversion of history. In this way in the novel *Tamas* Sahni highlights those people who exist on the margin, but not in a conventional fashion. With this novel, he fulfills more than one purpose; gives a voice to those whose voices are unheard and he construct the partition history where he mingles himself in favour of his origin.

Such horrible reality of partition is narrated in a very simple language, but in his writings, we find his involvement as a strong supporter of Hindu community. Though not as a writer but as a social human being his attempt seems to prove Hindus as innocent and Muslims as barbaric community and all those cruelties from Hindus are just as a self-defending act. Because of such sense of othering has overshadowed

the violence and Sahni's sense of hatred against Pakistan misleads to present factual details of violence.

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